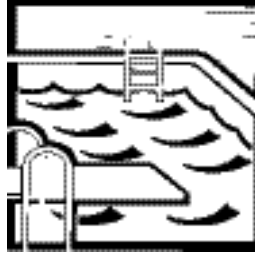


# Swimming Pool and Spa Safety

in the Event of a Power Outage



## *An Important Message from Environmental Health Services*

### What is happening?

Rolling blackouts, or rotating outages, are temporary and scheduled electric outages which last one to two hours, depending on circumstances. You might have no warning when one will happen but planning ahead is very helpful if one does occur.

Loss of power, even for a short time, can affect the safety of the bathers in your pool or spa. It is up to you to ensure the water chemistry standards (chlorine level and pH) and water clarity levels are maintained. The following guidelines will preserve the safety of bathers in your pool or spa if and when a power outage occurs.

### What could go wrong?

#### **During daylight hours of operation:**

- The recirculation system will not work. The clarity of the water will decrease and become cloudy. The pool bottom, along with any bathers, will not be clearly visible. The depth of the pool may be difficult to judge and debris may build up in the pool water.
- The automatic chlorine feed system will not work, allowing bacteria and other disease-causing agents to build up in the water. Bathers may become sick from incidental drinking of the water or may get ear infections or skin rashes.
- The pH of the water may change, causing irritation to bathers and resulting in itching and rashes.
- The recirculation equipment may experience a power surge which could cause damage to the pump and other recirculation equipment.

#### **During night hours of operation:**

- The pool area will become dark to the point of inability to see bathers in the pool or for bathers to find their way out of the pool area. Emergency lighting may be necessary to evacuate bathers. *Since night lighting is required for the pool/spa to stay open, even a temporary blackout will require closure.*

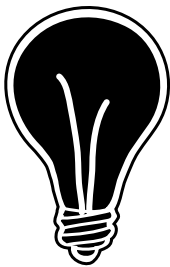
### **Environmental Health Services point of view**

The concern of EHS is public health and safety. We are especially concerned about the following:

- **Water clarity.** Is the pool water clear and is the bottom of the pool clearly visible?
- **Chlorine levels.** Is the chlorine level between 1.0-3.0 ppm.?
- **pH level.** Is the pH between 7.2-8.0?
- **Lighting.** Is the required lighting present for night use of a pool/spa?

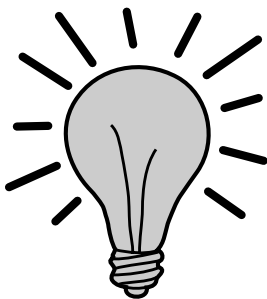
If the power outage causes you to be unable to provide a safe environment for the bathers you should voluntarily close your pool/spa and not open until you can provide a safe environment. *If you stay open without ensuring a safe and clean water supply and environment, bathers in your pool/spa may become ill or injured.* If you happen to be inspected by Environmental Health Services during a blackout and the pool is not safe to use, it will be posted closed immediately.

## What should I do?



Develop a plan and conduct training sessions for the people responsible for the pool/spa area before rolling blackouts hit:

- Be aware that bathers may become ill or injured in an emergency situation.
- Have a plan to check the water for clarity, chlorine level and pH during the short-term blackouts of one hour or less. If the number of people using the pool is small, the water chemistry and clarity of the water may be maintained during a temporary loss of power. If water clarity and water chemistry cannot be maintained the pool/spa should be voluntarily closed for use.
- If you decide the pool must be closed you need an organized plan to evacuate the bathers from the pool area. Make sure to check the pool, pool area, restroom, pool-change rooms and any other areas where children may hide. Do not leave any children unattended in a pool/spa area.
- Turn off the recirculation system and any other pool-related equipment after voluntary closure. Monitor the power supply to know when it is restored.
- If closure is necessary, be certain to secure the entrances to the pool/spa area to prevent bathers from entering the area.
- Make sure there is always one person on the premises who is aware of the above. *It is your business to protect the bathers and your business may be liable if injury or illness occurs.*



### After the power is restored

- Turn the recirculation system back on in stages if there is more than one pump involved in the system. Reset all the timer clocks and ensure the emergency shut-off switches for the spa are working properly.
- Test water chemistry to insure there is the required amount of chlorine and the pH is between 7.2-8.0.
- Check for water clarity and be certain the bottom of the pool is visible. This may require the recirculation system to run for a period of time.
- Reopen the pool only after you are thoroughly satisfied that all the pool equipment is operating properly and the water chemistry is acceptable.

The California Code of Regulations and the California Health and Safety Code require that public pools and spas be maintained in a sanitary, safe and healthful condition.

**For further information regarding power outages and pool/spa safety please call your local Environmental Health office at:**

Ontario	(909) 458-9673
San Bernardino	(909) 387-4608
Victorville	(760) 243-3773

